



Afternoon Alert - Thursday, September 1, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report that an earthquake with a seismic intensity of 3 on the Japanese scale occurred in Kumamoto Prefecture this morning. All commercial networks gave top play to reports on extensive damage caused by Typhoon Lionrock in northern Japan, saying that 18 people remain missing in Iwate.

SECURITY

Group adopts NGO recommendations to prevent introduction of invasive species to Okinawa

Ryukyu Shimpo gave top play to a report saying that ahead of its general congress to be held in Hawaii on Sept. 1, the International Union for Conservation of Nature adopted recommendations drafted by six Japanese NGOs, including WWF Japan, for the Japanese government to take strict steps to prevent the introduction of alien species into Okinawa through landfill work at Henoko. The recommendations also ask the U.S. to take appropriate measures to prevent non-native species from entering Okinawa through landfill and military activities and to work with the Japanese government to minimize the impact of the introduction of such species. The paper wrote that although the recommendations are not binding, opposition to the FRF construction at Henoko will likely grow in the international community following the world's largest nature conservation network's acknowledgement of the issue. In online voting conducted from Aug. 3 to Aug. 17 by governments and NGOs in 160 nations, 80 governments supported the recommendations, 2 opposed them, and 74 abstained. Some 459 NGOs backed the recommendations, 24 opposed them, and 204 abstained. The Japanese government was among those that abstained.

- [U.S. washes hands of rights violations at Okinawa helipad site](#) (The Japan Times)
- [U.S. military facility costs drive up Okinawa-related spending in MOD budgetary request](#) (Ryukyu Shimpo)
- [Editorial: Revision of organized crime law a vital weapon against terrorism](#) (The Japan News)

INTERNATIONAL

PM Abe creates new ministerial post overseeing economic cooperation with Russia

NHK, NTV, and TV Asahi reported that PM Abe has decided to create a new cabinet ministerial post charged with promoting economic cooperation with Russia and tap Economy, Trade, and Industry Minister Seko to concurrently take up the new portfolio. TV Asahi said that by demonstrating Japan's stance of promoting economic cooperation with Russia, PM Abe is aiming to make progress on the issue of the Northern Territories. The network reported that the bargaining between the two nations has already begun, saying that while Russia recently announced that President Putin will visit Japan in December, a GOJ source said the dates for the visit have not been decided and Putin should not come to Japan without bringing a "souvenir." The network added that the GOJ will not promote bilateral economic cooperation in the absence of a "souvenir" in the form of progress in the territorial issue. NHK also reported that PM Abe is planning to propose holding a bilateral summit every year in Vladivostok in order to further strengthen his relationship of trust with President Putin.

- [Trump "regrets" past statements, stops Japan bashing](#) (Nikkei)
- [A review of Abe's diplomacy toward Russia](#) (Nikkei)
- [Secret talks between Nikai and "hard-core anti-Japan" Wang Yi](#) (Shukan Gendai)
- [Canada to join China-backed Asian infrastructure bank](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Fast-growing AIIB seen surpassing ADB's roster](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Cartoon: TICAD](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: Putin's Japan trip](#) (Asahi)

SOCIETY

JICA-run youth volunteer program wins "Asia's Nobel Prize"

Asahi and several other papers wrote that Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV), a youth volunteer program operated by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), received the Ramon Magsaysay Award, known as Asia's equivalent of the Nobel Prize. JOCV was one of six programs that received the award for 2016 at a ceremony held in Manila on Aug. 31. JOCV has sent more than 41,000 Japanese volunteers aged 20 to 39 to 88 developing nations to assist with education, agriculture, and other areas since 1965. The award foundation recognized JOVC for "demonstrating over five decades that it is indeed when people live, work, and think together that they lay the true foundation for peace and international solidarity."

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on August 31](#) (Nikkei)
- [Main budget items requested for FY2017](#) (Mainichi)
- [Nikai to serve as coordinator for Abe's fiscal policy to support Kantei](#) (Nikkei)
- [LDP coordination on candidate for Fukuoka by-election stalls](#) (Yomiuri)
- [DP presidential election might become three-way race](#) (Sankei)
- [Gov't subsidy to LDP to increase](#) (Asahi)

ECONOMY

- [MAFF to support farmers' shift from rice to vegetables](#) (Nikkei)
- [LDP's Koizumi prepares for battle over agricultural administration reform in fall](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: It will be too late to take steps after key fishery resources are depleted](#) (The Japan News)
- [Cartoon: Zero overtime system](#) (Akahata)

EDUCATION

- [Japan high school teachers walk fine line in teaching politics](#) (The Japan Times)

TV PROGRAMS

[New rule for rebuilding apartment complexes](#)

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" on Wednesday reported that residents of housing complexes in Japan are having difficulty reaching a consensus on whether to rebuild or repair old buildings. Since rebuilding apartment complexes used to require the consent of four-fifths of the residents, not many housing complexes have been rebuilt. In order to promote the reconstruction of aging housing complexes, the GOJ recently changed the law so that reconstruction only requires the consent of two-thirds of the residents. However, the new rule is reportedly causing controversy among residents.

